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Department of State

EXCISE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 01

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INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 OCS-06 CA-01 SY-05 SYE-00 CIAE-00
 INR-10 NSAE-00 HA-06 L-03 MED-05 SS-15 PPT-01
 SPRS-02 PA-01 ANAE-00 /067 W

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P 031528Z DEC 80

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3729

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 21669

E.O. 12065: 12/3/86 (BROWN, WILLIAM A.) OR-M

TAGS: CASC, SOCI, CPAS, IS

SUBJECT: BLACK HEBREW LEADER [REDACTED] SNUBS EMBASSY MEETING

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)

2. ON DECEMBER 2, EMBOFFS ELLIOTT, DIETERICH, AND SPRICK TRAVELLED TO DIMONA FOR A PREARRANGED MEETING WITH BLACK HEBREW COMMUNITY (BHC) LEADER [REDACTED] AFTER WAITING 45 MINUTES EMBOFFS WERE INFORMED THAT [REDACTED] WAS BUSY AND WOULD MEET US, IF HE COULD, AT "THE VILLAGE" -- THE BHC'S NEW QUARTERS IN THE PREVIOUSLY ABANDONED DIMONA IMMIGRANT ABSORPTION CENTER. HE NEVER DID.

3. EMBOFFS WERE THEN ESCORTED TO THE NEW QUARTERS BY "PRINCE AVSHALOM." THUS FAR 48 TWO-BEDROOM UNITS HAVE BEEN TURNED OVER TO THE BHC. EVENTUALLY, ANOTHER 12 UNITS WILL BE RELEASED FOR BHC USE. MANY OF THE UNITS VIEWED WERE IN POOR CONDITION, AND WOULD REQUIRE EXTENSIVE RENOVATION TO BE HABITABLE. OTHER UNITS APPEARED TO BE IN REASONABLE CONDITION AND WERE ALREADY OCCUPIED. ACCORDING TO AVSHALOM, THE ENTIRE DIMONA BHC HAS MOVED INTO THE "VILLAGE," AND WE ARE ONCE AGAIN FACED WITH A POSSIBLE CHANGE IN THE BHC TALLY. AVSHALOM STATED THAT THE POLICE HAD REGISTERED EACH NEW OCCUPANT OF THE VILLAGE. JACQUES AMIR, THE MAYOR OF DIMONA, STATED TO THE PRESS IN SEPTEMBER THAT THERE WERE 692 BLACK HEBREWS IN DIMONA. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO GET THE LATEST FIGURES FROM THE DIMONA POLICE AUTHORITIES. HOWEVER, WE SAW NO EVIDENCE OF OVERCROWDING, AND 692 PEOPLE WOULD COME OUT TO 14-15 PEOPLE PER TWO-ROOM UNIT. AVSHALOM ALSO HINTED THAT BHC MEMBERS FROM ARAD AND MITZPE RAMON MAY JOIN THE DIMONA COMMUNITY SINCE CONDITIONS WERE FAR LESS CROWDED AND [REDACTED] DESIRES TO HAVE THE BHC TOGETHER, BUT INDICATED THEY HAD NO PRESENT PLANS TO MOVE PEOPLE FROM THOSE TWO CITIES.

4. WHILE TOURING THE VILLAGE, EMBOFFS WERE SHOWN A "SCHOOL" WHICH HAD NO REAL FACILITIES OR MATERIAL AND SHOWED A RUDIMENTARY LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON THE BHC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN THE FUTURE.

5. COMMENT: WE DO NOT KNOW THE REASON FOR [REDACTED] SNUB. THE VISIT DID PROVIDE A FIRSTHAND LOOK AT THE NICELY LAID-OUT "VILLAGE" ISRAELI AUTHORITIES HAVE PROVIDED THE BHC. FRICTION BETWEEN THE BHC AND ISRAELI CITIZENS IN DIMONA HAS ALREADY DIMINISHED, ACCORDING TO AVSHALOM. THE VILLAGE IS A MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN BHC LIVING CONDITIONS AND SHOULD GIVE [REDACTED] AND HIS FOLLOWERS CAUSE FOR SOME OPTIMISM. LEWIS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY

JL

DATE

8/10/81

PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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